

Prayerlessness

I think the greatest sin of our churches today is prayerlessness. I am very troubled by the lack of prayer, not only in our churches but in the lives of Christians. During the first and second Great Awakenings, it was well-known that revival was always precipitated by a spirit of prayer. Charles G. Finney was keenly aware that prayer was what made his ministry so effective. His wife would travel with him and hold prayer meetings for women during the revival meetings. It's no wonder thousands (probably more like hundreds of thousands) of people came to Christ during those ministries. So what is wrong with us today that we don't pray more? Surely every church actually believes in the power of prayer, and every minister knows that prayer is the most important part of their ministry.

First, I believe that people no longer have the desire to pray because of the need for instant gratification. Because it is necessary to persevere in prayer and answers may take months or even years to see, people don't feel drawn to spend their time doing it.

Second, while people say they believe that their prayers will be answered, most people do not REALLY believe this to be the case. Most people pray as a sense of duty and don't really engage in meaningful prayer. They don't feel a sense of connection with God and therefore don't feel that their prayers are heard.

Prayer is something that is quiet and soul-searching. Most people just don't want to be "bored". They want to be entertained. And they certainly don't want to come under conviction and get all emotional and start changing their lives. Let's face it, most people are just comfortable where they are.

So, how do we change this situation? I guess it starts with one person being committed to prayer. Then hopefully, as that person's prayers are answered, the spirit of prayer begins to spread until we have a revival of prayer. Only then will we see true revival and a turn-around in our country. God, let it start with me.

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